



OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE  
*Milwaukee County*  
CHRIS ABELE • COUNTY EXECUTIVE

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## **Milwaukee County Executive Chris Abele Announces Prevention Effort Against Substance Abuse**

**MILWAUKEE** – County Executive Chris Abele yesterday announced the launch of Light & Unite Red, a campaign spearheaded by Milwaukee County to increase awareness about substance abuse among Milwaukee area teens. The campaign is in its second year in Milwaukee County and is part of National Drug and Alcohol Fact Week (January 23 – 29, 2017), an effort that unites communities across the nation to engage in prevention, encourage treatment and support recovery.

“In 2015, 255 people in Milwaukee County died from a drug-related overdose,” said County Executive Chris Abele. “These are our sons and daughters, our brothers and sisters, our parents, neighbors and friends. Milwaukee County has resources available for individuals and families struggling with addiction. The Light & Unite Red campaign is an opportunity for us to raise awareness about how we can help.”

The Light & Unite Red committee consists of more than 25 health departments, schools, nonprofits and other community organizations who are working to provide information about drugs and alcohol to counteract the myths that teens learn from the internet, social media, TV, movies, music or from friends. Their efforts also target educators and parents, providing them with information on how to start conversations with their youth and connect them with resources for treatment and recovery.

Other activities planned for this week include special events at area high schools, social media blitzes, city-wide “wear red” days, and resource and information booths at Marquette basketball games and other community events. A full list of events can be found at [www.lightunitered.org](http://www.lightunitered.org).

The press conference preceded an addiction information resource fair, hosted at the South Milwaukee Performing Arts Center (902 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue, South Milwaukee, WI). Here, County Executive Chris Abele shared a proclamation, announcing this week as National Drug & Alcohol Fact week. Other speakers included Mike Lappen, Administrator of the Behavioral Health Division;

Erik Brooks, Mayor of the City of South Milwaukee; and Michelle Jakulski, a mother of two sons in recovery.

For more information about Light & Unite Red, visit [www.lightunitered.org](http://www.lightunitered.org).

**Light & Unite Red partners:**

Milwaukee County, South Milwaukee Health Department, West Allis West Milwaukee Community Coalition, North Shore Health Department, Hales Corner Health Department, Greendale Health Department, Village of Greendale, West Allis Fire Department, Franklin Health Department, Oak Creek Health Department, City of Wauwatosa Health Department, IMPACT 2-1-1, Milwaukee County Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition (MCSAP), Children's Community Health Plan, 53206 Drug-Free Communities Project, Starting Point, Franklin Area Parents and Students United, Beyond Addiction, Tobacco-Free of Suburban Milwaukee & Ozaukee Counties, ARCW, WAWM Community Coalition, Community Advocates, AIDS Resource Center of Wisconsin, and Mind, Body & Soul Dancers.

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